



What am I going to do after high school?

What is next for me?

How do I get there from here?

- ◆ Do you want to work after you finish high school? Start now! Working a part-time or volunteer job will help build skills you will use later. The experience adds value to your résumé.
- ◆ Think about what type of job you want. What skills and interests do you have? Knowing these will help you figure out what might be a good job for you.
- ◆ Take part in activities at school, at home and in the community. This will help build your skills and increase your interests.

This fact sheet and others can be found at www.mdod.maryland.gov and www.mdworkforcepromise.org.

Questions?

Contact the Maryland Department of Disabilities.

School to Work

Overview

Have you thought about what you will do after high school? Do you want to go straight to work, or continue your studies? This fact sheet is designed to help you as you move from high school to the adult world. It explains the various programs and opportunities that are available to you as you make the transition from school to work. Contact information for the programs mentioned is listed in the resources section of this fact sheet.

Transitioning Youth Programs

Transition programs help you to make a successful adjustment from the school setting to higher education or to work. The following are all important parts of a successful transition:

- ◆ Information about getting and keeping the job you want.
- ◆ Opportunities to experience work through mentoring programs, internships, apprenticeships, or volunteer opportunities.
- ◆ What you and your teacher(s) should be focusing on during the school year, beginning when you are age 14.

If you are currently in high school and have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), it should include a statement about the transition services you will need. If you become eligible for vocational services, you will complete an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The IPE indicates your employment goal, services needed to reach that goal, and who will provide and pay for those services. The IPE also explains how the services will be evaluated and when you and your team expect to reach your employment goal.

If you are transitioning to higher education, look into

the **HEATH Resource Center**. Here you will find information about educational support services, policies, procedures and adaptations. In addition to college, you will also find opportunities at vocational-technical schools and other postsecondary training facilities.

For more information on transition plans, visit www.nichcy.org. Also, the *Transitioning Youth Handbook: Navigating the Developmental Disabilities Administration Service System* is available for download at www.dhmd.state.md.us/dda_md/transitioning.htm.

Maryland Youth Leadership Forum

The **Maryland Youth Leadership Forum (MD/YLF)** is a leadership program open to high school students entering their final two years. It is designed to encourage and empower students with disabilities. If you are selected to attend, you will participate in a week-long program on a college campus. The program usually is held at Bowie State University the last week of July or the first week of August.

Throughout the week, you will gain leadership skills, receive career guidance and develop friendships with other students from across the state. Working in small

groups, you will explore your interests and develop personal and career plans.

You will learn about resources for assistive technology, community support and civil rights. Guest speakers are successful adults who also have disabilities. They discuss topics such as the disability rights movement, self advocacy, careers and technology. Learning is fun at the Forum as you participate in social, artistic, athletic and recreational activities.

The deadline for applying for the MD/YLF is typically mid-January. The application is posted at www.md-ylf.org.

Internships, Apprenticeships and Mentors

Internship programs offer you the opportunity for a short-term training experience in the type of job that interests you. There are paid and unpaid internships. You are not usually paid with student internships, and you might not get academic credit, but the experience helps build your résumé. Internships help you learn the tasks of the job as well as what it is like to work at that business. You should expect to be evaluated regularly. Your school and your local One-Stop Career Center can help you locate internship opportunities.

Apprenticeship programs include education and training that can help you prepare for a variety of jobs. These programs are designed to provide you with opportunities to learn skills that might lead to full-time, regular employment. Apprenticeship programs have eligibility requirements, qualifications and selection procedures.

Your school and your local One-Stop Career Center can help you locate apprenticeship opportunities.

Mentors are adults who spend time with you and offer support, advice and friendship. Mentors can offer you new opportunities and teach you about different jobs. They can help you learn and practice the skills needed to be successful in life. For information on mentoring opportunities, visit the *American Association of People with Disabilities* at www.aapd.com.

Disability Mentoring Day is an annual event that promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities. The experience provides job shadowing and hands-on career exploration with local businesses. Check the AAPD, DORS and ODEP websites (listed below) for information on this annual event.

Summer Jobs and Part-time Work

Summer jobs and part-time work offer valuable work experience. These types of jobs help you develop basic work-readiness skills and attitudes that employers say are important. Staff at your local One-Stop Career Center can help you in your search for summer and part-time work opportunities.

Social Security Work Incentives

A Benefits Counselor is an important resource for you as you transition to work. A Benefits Counselor can explain the Social Security Administration (SSA) programs for which you might be eligible, and how earnings from work might affect your cash benefits. Ask about SSA's Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE), Blind Work Expenses (BWE), Plan to Achieve Self Support (PASS), and rules 1619(a) and 1619(b). If you are not familiar with these work incentives, refer to the fact sheet called *Think You Can't Work? Think Again...*

Resources

Maryland Service Providers

Benefits InfoSource Main Office

Voice: (301) 277-2839
TTY: Use Maryland Relay 711
Website: www.innow.org

Benefits Resource Center

Voice: (410) 444-1400
TTY: (800) 735-2258
Email: mcil@mcil-md.org
Website: www.mcil-md.org

Maryland State Dept. of Education Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Voice: (410) 554-9385 / (888) 554-0334
TTY: (410) 554-9411
Email: dors@dors.state.md.us
Website: www.dors.state.md.us

Additional Information

America's Service Locator

(to locate your One-Stop Career Center)
Voice: (877) 348-0502
TTY: (877) 348-0501
Website: www.servicelocator.org

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

Voice: (202) 457-0046 / (800) 840-8844
TTY: (202) 457-0046 / (800) 840-8844
Email: aapd@aol.com
Website: www.aapd.com

DisabilityInfo.gov

At www.DisabilityInfo.gov you can find more information on transitioning from school to work or to higher education.

HEATH Resource Center of George Washington University

Voice: (202) 973-0904 / (800) 544-3284
TTY: (202) 973-0904 / (800) 544-3284
Email: askheath@gwu.edu
Website: www.heath.gwu.edu

Maryland Department of Disabilities

Voice / TTY: (410) 767-3660
Voice / TTY: (800) 637-4113
Email: mdod@mdod.state.md.us
Website: www.mdod.maryland.gov

Maryland Disability WorkFORCE Information Exchange

Voice: (301) 662-0099
TTY: (301) 662-4853
Email: info@mdworkforcepromise.org
Website: www.mdworkforcepromise.org

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/Youth (NCWD/Youth)

Voice: (877) 871-0744
TTY: (877) 871-0665
Website: www.ncwd-youth.info

TransCen, Inc.

Voice: (301) 424-2002
TTY: (301) 309-2435
Email: inquiries@transcen.org
Website: www.transcen.org

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Office of Disability Employment Policy

Voice: (866) 633-7365
TTY: (877) 889-5627
Website: www.dol.gov/odep